

REMARKS

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 27 and 46 have been amended and claims 58-61 have been cancelled. Claims 27-29, 32, 34, 35, 37-52, 54, 56 and 57 are pending and under consideration.

Claims 27, 29, 34, 35, 37-39, 42, 46, 47 and 52-56 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 4,546,534 to Nicholas in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,495,324 to Guthrie et al. Claims 28, 32, 40, 41, 43-45, 48-51 and 57 are separately rejected as being obvious over Nicholas and Guthrie, taken together or with additional references.

The Examiner asserts that Fig. 2 of Nicholas shows an electrical component having a contact surface 14, an insulating layer 15 and an electrical connecting lead 21. The Examiner cites Guthrie et al. for an electrical connecting lead comprising first and second metallization layers. Independent claim 27, for example, recites this feature as follows:

the electrical connecting lead comprising first and second metallization layers, the first metallization layer being located on the lateral surface, such that the first metallization layer meets the contact surface at an angle less than 90 degrees, the second metallization layer being formed of a material different from the first metallization layer, the second metallization layer being formed directly on a portion of the first metallization layer, the second metallization layer being formed over the insulating layer and outside of the opening in the insulating layer, the second metallization layer having a thickness greater than that of the first metallization layer.

Independent claim 46 contains different, but somewhat similar, limitations. For example, independent claim 46 recites a metallization layer and a section of the connecting lead separate from the metallization layer.

The Examiner asserts that Guthrie discloses a first metallization layer 11/13/16 and a second metallization layer 17/25. Referring to Fig. 4 of Guthrie, three metallization layers are clearly formed 11, 13 and 16. The fact that layers 11, 13 and 16 are separate can clearly be seen by the fact that they are positioned at different distances from the silicone wafer 10. Moreover, they have different widths indicating that they are formed in separate steps. Still further, layers 11 and 13 are formed from aluminum, whereas layer 16 is formed from alloyed aluminum. Clearly, these three elements 11, 13 and 16 are not a single layer.

Because the claims require that the second metallization layer/section of the connecting lead has a greater thickness than the (first) metallization layer, the Examiner relies upon both

layers 17 and 25 shown in Fig. 4 of Guthrie et al. for this limitation. However, it is also clear that layers 17 and 25 are not a single layer. They have different positions with regard to the silicone wafer 10. They have different shapes and different lateral thicknesses.

The Examiner kindly discussed the above situation with the undersigned. The Examiner's time in preparing for and conducting the discussions is acknowledged and gratefully appreciated.

During the discussions, the Examiner seemed to agree that the references are different from the present invention, as discussed above. However, the Examiner indicated that the claimed term "layer" reads on a plurality of layers. To address this, the Examiner suggested amending the claims to recite that the first metallization layer consists only of a single layer. To further prosecution, applicants have incorporated the Examiner's suggestion. By accepting the Examiner's suggested change, applicants assume the application is in condition for allowance.

With regard to claim 46, the Examiner asserts that the contact surface of Guthrie et al. is located in the vicinity of the alloyed aluminum layer 11. The Examiner asserts that this contact surface is masked after the first metallization layer is formed. However, only two elements are shown which conceivably would be considered a mask for the contact surface. Specifically, layers 11 and 14 cover the contact opening. Layer 13 cannot be considered a mask because the Examiner asserts layer 13 is part of the (first) metallization layer. Layer 14 cannot be considered a mask because it is formed before aluminum layer 16. The claims clearly require that the opening be masked after the (first) metallization layer is formed. Although Guthrie et al. does not show all of the fabrication steps, it appears that a single mask is used to form layers 16 and 17. This is contrary to the language of claim 46. Photoresist 19 is formed after both layers 16 and 17 are deposited and before both layers 16 and 17 are shaped. Layers 16 and 17 are not separately treated. Neither reference suggests the features discussed above.

In view of the differences described above, it is submitted that the claims patentably distinguish over the cited references and the prior art rejections should be withdrawn.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

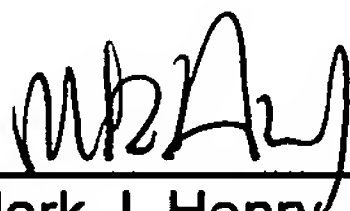
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If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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